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SUBJECT: NOVEMBER COLOMBIA STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE UPDATE

REF: BOGOTA 3582; BOGOTA 3262; BOGOTA 2904

Summary

11. (SBU) The Embassy activated the Northern Band (Bajo Cauca in northern Antioquia) as the fourth Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI) priority zone. Montes de Maria will remain a part of CSDI but requires less coordinated action from USG agencies due to progress on the ground. General Oscar Naranjo, Director of the Colombian National Police (CNP), agreed to work with the Narcotic Affairs Section (NAS) on possible joint initiatives, USG assistance in CSDI areas and opportunities for additional CNP nationalization of programs. The Embassy CSDI team is stepping up coordination both internally and with the GOC in Narino in the Southern Band. The National Planning Department (DNP) has begun to engage on consolidation in a welcome step towards institutionalizing the GOC's National Consolidation Plan (PNC).
End Summary.

CSDI Activates Northern Band Priority Zone

12. (SBU) The Embassy decided to activate and make the Northern Band -- Bajo Cauca in Northern Antioquia -- one of the top three CSDI priority zones. The Northern Band's Nudo del Paramillo sits atop the GOC's hierarchy of priorities for consolidation: all of Colombia's foreign terrorist organizations threaten the zone, and almost a quarter of yearly eradication efforts take place in the area. The Northern Band is entangled by complex and intractable problems that demand a focused and coordinated response from the GOC and all USG agencies. Without complete CSDI support, the GOC would only achieve marginally better stabilization and counternarcotics results. The initiative and leadership demonstrated by the Antioquia governor's office -- the best current example of local-level ownership of consolidation -- will facilitate efforts.

13. (SBU) Progress in Montes de Maria, south of Cartagena straddling the departments of Sucre and Bolivar, allows this shift in emphasis. The zone is the furthest along the consolidation sequence of territorial control, stabilization and consolidation, and no longer requires either intensive interagency coordination or extensive resource expenditures by NAS or MILGP. USG activities in Montes de Maria will continue within the rubric of CSDI as AID continues development activities and the working group promotes and supports the organized transition of public security responsibilities from the military to the police.

CSDI and CNP Aligning Strategies

¶4. (SBU) NAS Director discussed CSDI with General Oscar Naranjo and General Rafael Parra, CNP Director and Deputy Director. General Naranjo expressed interest in identifying means to enhance the capabilities and interdiction productivity of local police forces in CSDI zones. He noted that the CNP is particularly focused on the Antioquia/Bajo Cauca region (CSDI Northern Band) and is interested in discussing potential NAS assistance in this area. Naranjo agreed to work closely with NAS to develop priorities for joint initiatives, and to look for future opportunities for

additional CNP program nationalization. Through close coordination with CNP leadership and Embassy CSDI counterparts, NAS expects to refine its CSDI approach into better alignment with the CNP's strategy in the coming months.

Cooperation and Integration Advancing in Southern Band

¶5. (SBU) A CSDI team of AID and NAS officers traveled to Pasto, Narino, on November 23-24 and met with departmental police heads and governorship officials to discuss consolidation efforts in the Southern Band. The trip was coordinated with Social Action (Accion Social), the GOC consolidation and development agency. Narino's leadership identified eight target municipalities (counties) for CSDI involvement which AID, NAS and MILGP are reviewing. The Embassy CSDI team and GOC officials discussed possible USG support options for Narino's local police efforts. Overall, local officials were receptive and shared their security plan, operational priorities and major social challenges in the zone.

¶6. (SBU) Over the last four years, USG and GOC alternative development programs in the region have made headway in reducing coca production and increasing governance. AID officers told Colombians that they have identified funding for short-term food security and infrastructure activities in Tumaco to take advantage of these gains and maintain positive momentum over the next 8-10 months until the GOC consolidation strategy and budget for the zone come fully on-line. CSDI and Colombian officials discussed how the funding could best achieve joint consolidation goals. The short-term activities are being designed to reinforce a licit economy and culture in areas where NAS is working with the CNP on improving security conditions to align development with security strategy.

¶7. (U) The Tumaco municipality -- principal CSDI focus in Narino -- holds notoriety for being the single largest producer of coca and having the highest murder rate in Colombia. President Uribe mandated months ago that the CNP and Ministry of Defense assign special envoys to the area to bring Tumaco back under the control of the government and security forces. The new security sector special envoy arrives in Tumaco in December.

Institutionalizing the PNC

¶8. (SBU) The Colombian National Planning Department (DNP) designs, orients and evaluates public policy towards a social, economic and environmental strategic vision for Colombia in a role similar to the USG's Office of Management and Budget. The DNP is a key player in institutionalizing consolidation and transforming it into a state policy that outlasts the current Uribe administration. In a positive development, the DNP is now engaging the Coordination Center for Integrated Action (CCAI) -- GOC coordinating mechanism for the National Consolidation Plan (PNC) -- three times per week to work on the resource question. Currently, the PNC expects civilian ministries to reallocate existing resources towards consolidation, something they have been reluctant to do. Ideally, each ministry would have line items in their budgets for consolidation ensuring continued efforts to support the PNC.

¶9. (U) Also to promote the sustainability of consolidation, AID is providing leadership training to PNC staff. The training will

promote institutional memory and promulgate the lessons learned from individual consolidation implementers throughout the GOC consolidation bureaucracy.

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